

DISEASES OF THE NEWBORN. By A. J. Schaffer and Mary Ellen Avery.
Fourth edition. (Pp. xxviii + 1116; illustrated. £25). Philadelphia, London,
Toronto: Saunders, 1977.

EVER since the first edition in 1960 this book has been characterised by the skill with which Dr. Schaffer brought together the achievements and recent researches in paediatric science and related them to the practical clinical care of the neonate. The later assistance of Dr. Mary Ellen Avery was an assurance of a continuing commitment to this aim, and now, with the assistance of 25 contributors, there should be further certainty that every aspect is dealt with by a competent authority.

The book is a most comprehensive text where not only the clinician, but also those interested in the pathology of neonatal life, will find data on nearly any aspect and an up-to-date and well-chosen list of references at the end of each sub-section. Some may doubt if so many co-authors were really necessary or useful. They will welcome, for example, the clarity and integration of the discussion on "Disorders of the respiratory system", where the hand of Dr. Avery may be discerned, and compare it to some short sub-sections revised by other contributors. Anyone who has striven to maintain a large and fully-documented single-author textbook on this rapidly progressing field will agree that some sub-division of authorship is now necessary if such a book is to reflect current knowledge.

The book remains an invaluable reference source and is essential for all having anything to do with the welfare of the newborn infant. It relates the monumental laboratory advances in the last few decades to the needs of those concerned with the newborn. Some sections will be read through with interest and stimulation, but in the mass of detail the overall picture will be difficult to comprehend. Those who see the early days of life as determined and conditioned by events before birth will find some brief and useful discussions of intra-uterine life. They will fail to find, as perhaps they will in every book written, a clear presentation of foetal and neonatal life as a continuum, and this book is concerned with neonatology rather than what it is now fashionable to designate as perinatology.

J.E.M.

PATHOLOGY OF THE SPINAL CORD. By J. Trevor Hughes, Second Edition
Pp. xii + 256; figs. 74. £7.50) London. Lloyd-Luke (Medical Books) Ltd.
1977.

TO some readers the separation of the spinal cord and brain may seem arbitrary since similar pathological principles can be applied throughout the central nervous system. However, the concept of 'selective vulnerability' is particularly applicable to the central nervous system and certain diseases show a predelection for specific anatomical sites within the nervous system. In this respect the spinal cord deserves special treatment and it is with this aim that this book has been produced.

Dr. Hughes has written a clear and concise account of the pathology of the spinal cord first for the clinician concerned with the management of patients with paraplegia and tetraplegia and secondly for the general pathologist who rarely examines the spinal cord at necropsy and encounters technical and interpretive difficulties when he does. The text is clear, the illustrations well-chosen and the selected references provide useful sources to those who wish to delve deeper. This moderately priced book is highly recommended.

I.V.A.

ERRATUM

The authors, Savage, J. M. and Slattery C., wish to correct an error in the title of their paper in volume 46, page 123 (1977). This should have read "Hyperosmolar non-ketotic hyperglycaemia during oral diazoxide therapy of prolonged hypoglycaemia in infancy".